

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

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R 010915Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
SECSTATE WASHDC 7341

C O N F I D E N T I A L REYKJAVIK 0743

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR, UR, IC
SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR BIO INFORMATION ON SOVIET CITIZEN

1. SOVIETS APPEAR TO HAVE MADE SIGNIFICANT PRESS BREAK THROUGH WITH PUBLICATIONS IN MOST IMPORTANT ICELANDIC DAILY OF SERIES OF ARTICLES ON USSR BY SOVIET NATIONAL NAMED VLADIMIR JAKUB RPT VLADIMIR JAKUB. ACCORDING TO EMBASSY INFORMATNTS, JAKUB ARRIVED RECENTLY IN ICELAND AND IMMEDIATELY VISITED HEADQUARTERS OF LEADING CONSERVATIVE DAILY MORGUNBLADID WHERE HE SPOKE TO SENIOR EDITORS MATTHIAS JOHANNESSEN AND STYRMIR GUNNARSSON ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF RUNNING SERIES OF ARTICLES ON USSR WHICH JAKUB WOULD WRITE. JAKUB HAD STUDIED IN ICELAND

AT NATIONAL UNIVERSITY SEVERAL YEARS AGO AND APPARENTLY HAD ESTABLISHED PERSONAL FRIENDSHIP WITH JOHANNESSEN. ALTHOUGH MORGUNBLADID HAS CONSISTENTLY REFUSED TO USE ANY MATERIAL FROM SOVIET OFFICIAL NEWS AGENCY NOVOSTY, JOHANNESSEN REPORTEDLY DID AGREE TO RUN JAKUB'S SERIES AS PERSONAL FAVOR AND TO PAY HIM FOR THEM ON BEING TOLD BY JAKUB THAT HE HAD NO FOREIGN EXCHANGE TO FINANCE TEMPORARY RESIDENCE IN ICELAND. (SHORTAGE OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE SEEMS AS CURIOUS AS JAKUB'S SUDDEN ARRIVAL SINCE HE STATED THAT HE WOULD BE DOING SOME

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TRAVEL FILMS ON ICELAND FOR SOVIET TV WHILE HERE AND WE UNDERSTAND IS VISITING NORTHERN ICELAND FOR THAT PURPOSE).

2. SOURCES INDICATE THAT AS STUDENT IN ICELAND, JAKUB FAVORABLY IMPRESSED ICELANDERS AND BECAME FLUENT IN ICELANDIC. WHEN RUSSIAN STUDIES CHAIR WAS BEING ESTABLISHED AT NATIONAL UNIVERSITY SOME YEARS AGO, ICELANDIC AUTHORITIES

REPORTDLY ASKED FOR JAKUB BUT WERE INFORMED THAT HE WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE VIEW REQUIREMENT FOR HIS PRESENCE IN MOSCOW TO TEACH SCANDINAVIAN LANGUAGES AT RUSSIAN DIPLOMAIC INSTITUTE. IN ADDITION TO PRINCIPAL ACADEMIC DUTIES AT MOSCOW UNIVERSITY, HE REPORTEDLY HAS HIS OWN RADION PROGRAM ON WHICH, ACCORDING TO HIM, HE GIVES PROMINENCE TO ICELANDIC DEVELOPMENTS.

3. EMBASSY HAS REASON TO BELIEVE MORGUNBLADID IS EMBARRASSED BY PUBLICATION OF JAKUB ARTICLES, FEELS IT GOT BOXED IN BY JAKUB'S FLUENT ICELANDIC ANS SKILLFUL PITCH AND DOES NOT KNOW HOW TO GET OUT OF SITUATION IN WHICH IT FINDS ITSELF. AT LEAST ONE MEMBER OF ITS SENIOR EDITORIAL STAFF IS SUSPICIOUS RE JAKUB'S SUDDEN REAPPEARANCE AFTER NEARLY 12 YEARS AND IS CURIOUS AS TO WHETHER HERE IS ANY NEW LIGHT WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO SHED ON HIM. IF DEPT OR EMBASSY MOSCOW HAS ANYTHING WHICH WE COULD PASS ALONG, WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING IT. WE UNDERSTAND JAKUB IS JEWISH, IS MARRIED TO PROMINENT PIANIST IN SOVIET UNION, AND THEY BOTH LIVE VERY WELL.

BLAKE

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